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Federal Communications Commission
Office of Secretary

June 9, 2001

The Honorable Colin Powell
Secretary of State
2201 C Street N.W.
Washington DC
United States of America

Dear Colin

In its role as representative of the U.S. administration in the International Telecommunications Union, the Department of State considers matters that have a significant impact on development of communications infrastructure, both in the U.S. and globally. That infrastructure is vital not just for basic telephony, but as support for the broader global economic infrastructure. Ubiquitous and advanced telecommunications networks are thus indispensable in promoting health and economic well-being of developing nations. It is on behalf of communities in these nations that I would like to urge that U.S. policies continue to foster multiple and varied telecommunications services, including mobile satellite services, through your national and international spectrum policies.

The U.S. fought hard, and with the support of developing countries, to make spectrum available for satellite services, particularly mobile satellite services, for nearly a decade at the ITU. With the recent economic downturn, some parts of the satellite market, particularly the mobile satellite services sector, have faltered. Within that sector, ICO is wisely adapting its business plan to boost its prospects for success in a difficult market,

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and its **tenacious commitment** to building an Innovative **broadband** mobile **satellite** system should be given the government's **utmost** support. Despite new strategies being adopted by ICO and other mobile **satellite** service providers, current economic circumstances have **made** it difficult to maintain existing services, and **have led** some to question **whether** any further support is warranted for **satellite** services.

Withdrawal of support for spectrum policies that promote satellite services, at **this** crucial Juncture, would be a **serious** error. The need for basic **telecommunications** infrastructure remains acute in **less** developed **areas** of the world. and **the** need is dramatic.

The **U.S.** must continue its leadership in promoting innovation and diversity **of** telecommunications infrastructure around **the** globe. Satellites are and **will remain** a pivotal element of **international communications** networks. Satellite services hold great promise **for expanding the** reach of telecommunications beyond urban areas to support infrastructure that supports health, education, and social services to rural and **remote** communities. For developing nations, they **may** be **the only** answer **to the** challenge of connecting communities that are isolated by terrain or distance **from** urban telecommunications infrastructure.

U.S. **leadership** in securing global allocations for **satellite** spectrum has been a **key** factor in bringing **basic** communications to **regions** where none existed **before**. Continued U.S. commitment **will** help developing countries expand this **infrastructure** beyond **the cities**, and to do so in a cost effective way. I hope you will carefully weigh these considerations in any **future** spectrum decisions on **satellite** services.

Sincerely,



NELSON MANDELA